



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Jose Obregon

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON RFP FOR A FIRE  
STATION ALERT SYSTEM**

**DATE:** February 18, 2004

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Approved

Date

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Council District: Citywide

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Report on a request for proposal (RFP) and adoption of a Resolution authorizing the Director of General Services to:

- a) Execute an agreement with Mobile Radio Engineers LLC, d.b.a. Day Wireless Systems for the purchase of a fire station alert system for a total cost of \$129,024.44 including delivery, installation, training, tax and one year of maintenance and support; and
- b) Execute change orders in an amount not to exceed a 5% contingency to cover unanticipated changes in the system design and/or installation.

## **BACKGROUND**

A key component of fire and medical emergency services dispatching is fire station alerting. Once the information required for an emergency response is gathered and the closest resources are determined, the fire station audio and visual alerts are activated. An interface between the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and the fire station alert system provides the most efficient method of dispatching emergency resources. Without a fully functioning alert system, dispatchers must use back up "manual alerting" which takes longer and results in delays in overall response times.

Using the CAD system, the dispatcher enters a dispatch command. The CAD and fire station alert systems are connected to the stations via dedicated telephone circuits. The station alert signal activates relays at the stations to ring the station bell, turn on lights at night and open an audio path from the station radio to the station public address system. The dispatcher then proceeds with a voice dispatch with the details of the emergency response.

The Fire Department's current station alert system is thirteen years old. Key components are no longer being manufactured and replacement parts are difficult to obtain. Therefore, the Fire Department needs to replace the existing station alert system.

## **ANALYSIS**

On September 18 2003, the RFP process was initiated with key milestones and dates as demonstrated in Table 1.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Requirement Advertised in City's Bid Line/Made Available to Public	9/8/03
Written Questions Due	9/19/03
Answers to Written Questions Distributed	9/26/03
Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference	10/6/03
Proposals Due	10/21/03

Table 1

The RFP was distributed to four companies. Each of these companies was represented at the mandatory pre-proposal conference which included a field trip to two fire houses to allow companies the opportunity to review where a typical installation will take place, and ask City staff members questions relative to delivery and installation of the equipment.

The minimum requirements to submit a proposal were:

- Must have successfully completed projects or contracts within the last three years to implement station alerting for systems similar in size to the City's.
- Must include a list of client reference(s) with actual ongoing or completed projects similar in size to the City's.
- Must identify a dedicated project manager who is a regular employee working for the proposing Company.
- Must commit the necessary resources to meet the required schedule.

The companies submitting proposals were:

- Day Wireless Systems (partnered with Zetron, Inc. to provide the hardware)
- Locution Systems, Inc.
- Motorola, Inc.
- Westnet, Inc.

A proposal evaluation panel was formed with cross-functional representation from the Fire and Information Technology Departments.

The general criteria, as set forth in Municipal Code 4.13.040, used to evaluate the technical proposals were:

- Capability and expertise of the contractor including quality of personnel and financial stability.
- Price
- Quality and content of the proposal, including meeting RFP criteria and overall responsiveness.
- Adherence to applicable Council policies as specified in this document.
- References
- Past service and performance record of the incumbent supplier.

The process for evaluating and scoring these criteria consisted of the following:

- A high level proposal review – conducted by Purchasing - to ensure that all required forms were included and properly executed.
- A technical evaluation and scoring of the proposals. Each member of the evaluation team independently scored each proposal.
- An analysis of the cost proposals. (cost proposals were submitted as separate sealed documents, and not shared with the evaluation panel until after the completion of the technical evaluation of the proposals).
- Checking references of the recommended company.

Table 2 summarizes the evaluation results and rankings of steps 1-3 as listed above:

<b>Company</b>	<b>High Level Review (Pass/Fail)</b>	<b>Technical Evaluation Score (100% max)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Motorola	Pass	74 %	1
Locution Systems	Pass	68 %	2
Day Wireless Systems	Pass	65 %	3
Westnet	Pass	48 %	4

Table 2

After considerable discussion, the evaluation committee concluded that the overall scores for the top three ranked suppliers were very close, with 9% separation between the scores, and that any solutions proposed by these companies were feasible. Fourth ranked Westnet was eliminated

from further consideration because their proposed scope of work lacked sufficient detail to convey a full understanding of the City project requirements.

After the technical scoring was completed, the panel reviewed pricing which is summarized in Table 3:

<b>Company</b>	<b>Total System Price</b>	<b>% Change from Low Price</b>
Day Wireless Systems	\$129,024.44	--
Locution Systems	\$227,487.38	76%
Motorola	\$355,375.33	175%
Westnet*	\$548,615.00	325%

Table 3

\* listed for information purposes only

## **SUMMARY**

After reviewing both technical scores and price, the evaluation team concluded that the best overall value is Day Wireless Systems, pending reference checks. Although technically ranked third behind top ranked Motorola, only nine percentage points separated their scores which did not justify Motorola's price at almost three times that of Day Wireless.

Day Wireless Systems proposed installing the Zetron Model 6/26 Fire Station Alerting System. Of particular benefit to the City is the fact that the proposed Day Wireless project manager previously worked at San Mateo County where he serviced and maintained a Zetron Fire Station Alert System for 58 fire stations.

Zetron Fire Station Alert equipment is widely used by fire departments throughout the world. It is a proven system, rugged and reliable with the features required by the City.

Fire Department staff performed a thorough reference check to validate Day Wireless as a prime contractor/installer of Zetron equipment, as well as the performance and reliability of Zetron equipment. All references were very positive.

### Local Business Preference

Day Wireless Systems claimed status as a local business. They have a sales and service office with eight employees located in San Jose.

Locution Systems is located in Golden, Colorado and did not claim status as a local business.

Motorola is located in San Diego, California and did not claim status as a local business.

Westnet is located in Huntington Beach, California and did not claim status as a local business.

### Managed Competition

This requirement was procured through a competitive process as a turnkey project to include all equipment, installation and training. The City does not have the in-house expertise to manufacture fire alert hardware, or the technical expertise to install all of the proposed solutions.

### Living Wage

The Office of Equality Assurance has determined that this requirement is exempt from Living/Prevailing Wage requirements.

### PUBLIC OUTREACH

Posted on the City's Bidline.

### COORDINATION

The memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Budget Office, the Fire Department, and the Information Technology Department.

### COST IMPLICATIONS

This Council item is consistent with General Principle #2, "We must focus on protecting our vital core city services"

On September 2, 2003, the City Council approved (item 2.3) an appropriation in City-wide Expenses to the Fire Department in the amount of \$1,000,000 from the General Fund Reserve for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system replacement and related equipment. A portion of this appropriation will be for replacement of the Fire Station Alert System.

### BUDGET REFERENCE

Fund #	Appn. #	Appn. Name	Total Appn.	Amount of order.	2003-2004 Appropriation Ordinance	Last Budget Action (Date, Ord. No.)
001	3247	Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System Replacement	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 129,024.44	Section No. 2.43	09/02/03 Ord. No. 26966

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**CEQA**

Not a project.

JOSE OBREGON

Director of General Services